NIAGARA DUTY-FREE SHOPS INC. FALLS AVENUE
EXCUSE ME, DO YOU HAVE SOY MILK?
WHAT?
MILK THEY MAKE FROM SOY?
THIS! DO YOU HAVE THIS?
NEWS COMING IN FROM HARLEM, THE STREETS LIT UP WITH A FULL-SCALE FIREFIGHT AS NEW AVENGER LUKE CAGE, KNOWN IN THE UNITED STATES AS POWER MAN, WAS AT THE CENTER OF A SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT ARREST.
HOW DO THEY DO THAT?
NESTLÉ
SOY
OH NO.
EYEWITNESSES SAY THAT THEY HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD BEFORE...
... UNTIL CAPTAIN AMERICA, LEADING A BRIGADE OF WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS SUPER HERO REBELS, OVERTOOK THE ARMADA OF SO-CALLED "CAPEKILLER AGENTS" AND QUICKLY MADE THEIR ESCAPE.
NEW
THEIR GETAWAY VEHICLE WAS FOUND A MILE FROM THE SCENE, AND THE HEROES' WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN.
EYEWITNESSES SAY THAT LUKE CAGE ESCAPED WITH THE HEROES.
OKAY.
OKAY.
NOW WE'RE TALKING.
TO BE CONTINUED...

MARVEL HEROES HOTSPOT

"Admit nothing, deny everything, make counteraccusations."

TOM MOLLY SEZ

My roommate, who is a teacher, told me that one of her students had asked her if Captain America was real. The girl's brother had told her that he was pretend, but she badly wanted him to exist. When I heard this story, the thing I was most surprised about was that a ten year old girl knew about a comic book character who hasn't appeared on the big screen. But the times, they are a' changing.

At Wizard World Philadelphia this past weekend, another friend of mine remarked that she's been seeing more women at the convention each year. It's no longer a surprising thing to see fangirls pawing through the stacks of half-priced trade paperbacks with the fanboys. I've been a comics fan since I was five years old. Growing up, I didn't meet any girls who shared my interest. But now the female comics fans seem to be coming out of the woodwork. Groups like Friends of Lulu have formed to unite women who read and work in comics. Many stores have "girl friendly" titles on display, but the employees are just as willing to show female customers traditional super hero books if that's what they're looking for. And it's not just the number of female fans that is growing. The women inside the pages are getting a better rap as well.

Today, female comic book characters aren't just the "women in refrigerators" of times past. Girls can admire Ms. Marvel's strength, Kate Bishop's bravery, She-Hulk's intelligence, and Spider-Girl's determination. Yes, many of these characters still have gravity-defying proportions that would cause them serious back problems in real life. But we're taking steps towards getting to a point where female super heroes get as much respect as their male counterparts.

We've still got a ways to go before the general public sees comics as a medium designed for everyone--men and women, adults and children alike. But with every new reader who picks up a comic book and likes what they see inside, we're getting closer.

So, yes, little girl, Cap can be real, if you want him to be.

Molly

ITEM! It's awards time in the comics industry, and some of the folks toiling in the Hotspot office have received their share of attention! YOUNG AVENGERS and Allan Heinberg were nominated for Best New Series and Best Writer, respectively, by the Eisner Awards. And the Harvey Awards were even more generous, putting up Brian Michael Bendis and Ed Brubaker for Best Writer, David Finch for Best Penciler, Tim Townsend for Best Inker, Frank D'Armata for Best Colorist, Steve Epting for Best Cover Artist, YOUNG AVENGERS for Best New Series, CAPTAIN AMERICA for Best Continuing Series, and both CAPTAIN AMERICA #7 and HOUSE OF M #8 for Best Single Issue--and that only scratches the surface of the accolades Marvel received (but the other guys can write their own plug-pages!) Congrats to all those nominated--you know how we'll be voting!

ITEM! We're just back from Wizard World Philadelphia, where we hobnobbed with the likes of Steve McNiven, Andy Kuhn, Dan Slott, Will Conrad, Mike Deodato, Greg Pak, Mike Oeming and the entire Romita clan. The highlight of the weekend was our annual trek to Gino's for authentic Philly cheesesteaks--but the high point of the show itself had to be the inaugural edition of "Prize or No-Prize", a wacky Mark Gruenwald-style game show in which the fans had an opportunity to show off their knowledge of Marvel trivia and win prizes--if they had the guts to stay in the game! We'll likely be staging "Prize or No-Prize" again throughout the season--so look for us at a convention center near you!

ITEM! Speaking of Mark Gruenwald, we were delighted to see the write-up the New York Daily News gave to his widow, Catherine Schuller, the other day. Catherine's been garnering some acclaim as a makeover specialist for plus-sized women, a career she began after Mark's untimely passing almost ten years ago. Catherine was always one of the good ones, so it's nice to see her get her due--and we want to be sure that she knows she hasn't been forgotten around the halls of mighty Marvel!

ITEM! It's been forever since there's been a new Jack Kirby comic from the House of Ideas, but all that is about to change--sorta. This month sees the release of JACK KIRBY'S GALACTIC BOUNTY HUNTERS #1, an all-new creator-owned Icon series penned by Jack's daughter Lisa Kirby, utilizing concepts and character designs created by the King! Mike Thibodeaux and Karl Kesel provide the artwork, aided and abetted by Richard French and Mike Royer, and colorist Wil Quintana! So if you're a fan of that old-time Marvel magic, it's a debut not to be missed!

AUBREY'S OUT-OF-CONTEXT FUNNIES

This month's doozy comes from Captain America Comics #7, from 1941!

ON SALE JULY 2006

ANNIHILATION: NOVA #4: Nova versus Annihilus!

ANNIHILATION: RONAN #4: The price of Ronan's freedom may be his life...

ANNIHILATION: SILVER SURFER #4: The Surfer battles Ravenous and his armada!

ANNIHILATION: SUPER-SKRULL #4: The Super-Skrull strikes back against the Annihilation Wave!

BEYOND #1: Nine heroes from across the Marvel Universe are thrust together on Battleworld!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #20: Cap faces an enemy from World War II!

CIVIL WAR #3: The battle lines are drawn!

CIVIL WAR: FRONT LINE #3: Behind bars, Speedball must fight for his survival!

CIVIL WAR: FRONT LINE #4: An old enemy visits Ben Urich!

CIVIL WAR: YOUNG AVENGERS & RUNAWAYS #1: Will the Young Avengers hunt the Runaways, or save them?

FANTASTIC FOUR #539: A CIVIL WAR tie-in. The Thing makes a drastic choice!

FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST FAMILY #5: A team divided! An enemy uncovered!

IRON MAN #10: The Sentry's mission: capture Iron Man!

JACK KIRBY'S GALACTIC BOUNTY HUNTERS #1: From the mind of "The King" comes a new group of heroes!

LAST PLANET STANDING #5: Galactus prepares to sacrifice the entire universe!

MARVEL TEAM-UP #22: Tony Stark, the Iron Maniac?!

MS. MARVEL #5: Guest starring Dr. Strange! A world dies!

NEW AVENGERS #22: A CIVIL WAR tie-in. Luke Cage chooses a side, but what will happen to his new family?

SHE-HULK #10: Shulkie takes on her own husband, the Man-Wolf!

SPIDER-GIRL #100: FINAL ISSUE! Spider-Girl meets her untimely end...or does she?

THUNDERBOLTS #104: A CIVIL WAR tie-in. The T-Bolts are building a super-villain army!

X-FACTOR #9: A CIVIL WAR tie-in! Guest starring the Astonishing X-Men!

FIVE FUN FACTOIDS FROM ANDY SCHMIDT

Editor of MS. MARVEL, X-FACTOR and ANNIHILATION

1. Andy is my middle name.
2. I owe my love of comics to my two older brothers, Arne and Craig.
3. Growing up, Havok and Union Jack were my two favorite Marvel super heroes.
4. My vocal cords were damaged in surgery, which altered my voice forever.
5. I'm reading The Da Vinci Code right now, and yes, the movie is out, and no, I have no intention of seeing it. R.I.F. = Reading is fun!

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